

Documents on Diplomacy: The Source

Negotiations with Spain Suspended *John Jay to Don Diego Gardoqui, Algiers, October 17, 1788*

Sir;
I have the honor of informing you that Congress have deemed it expedient in the present situation of affairs, to refer their negotiations with his Catholic Majesty to the federal Government, which is to assemble in March next. The dissolution of one Government and the establishment of another, form a period little adapted to negotiations, especially in a popular Government. The inconveniences which thence arise are obvious, and need not be enumerated, especially as you are well apprized that the term of the present Congress is nearly expired, & that a succeeding Congress adequate to such business, will not probably convene during the winter.

As these facts render the measure in question proper, I am persuaded you will so represent and explain it to his Catholic Majesty, as that it may be ascribed to the peculiar situation of our national Government and not to any desire or disposition to postpone a business which it is the interest of both parties to have speedily and satisfactorily settled.

I have the honor to be &,

JOHN JAY

Source

The Emerging Nation: A Documentary History of the Foreign Relations of the United States under the Articles of Confederation, 1780-1789, Mary A. Giunta, Editor-in-Chief, Volume III. Washington, DC : Government Printing Office, 1996.

NA: PCC, item 120, v.4, pp. 6-7 (LBkC); M40, reel 4.